
**Select Committee on
Environmental Health**

HJM 4007

Brief Description: Requesting Congress and the Environmental Protection Agency to further regulate benzene.

Sponsors: Representatives Hudgins, Campbell, Morrell, Wood, Hunt, Chase, Kenney, Simpson and Goodman.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requests that Congress delegate to the states the authority to regulate the effects of known carcinogens such as benzene.
- Requests that the United States Environmental Protection Agency equalize federal treatment of benzene by promulgating rules that do not put the health and well-being of Washington citizens at a greater risk than other citizens of the nation.

Hearing Date: 2/8/07

Staff: Amy McCormick (786-7290).

Background:

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) develops and enforces regulations to protect human health and the environment, including protecting the general public from exposure to airborne contaminants. Benzene is a known carcinogen, and one of several air pollutants emitted by motor vehicles and other mobile sources that contribute to the nationwide risk from breathing outdoor air toxics. A recent National Air Toxic Assessment conducted by the EPA indicated that Washington has high benzene levels. The federal Clean Air Act preempts states and localities from taking any additional action to regulate benzene in gasoline.

The EPA proposed a rule on March 29, 2006 on the Control of Hazardous Air Pollutants from Mobile Sources, which regulates several hazardous air pollutants, including benzene. The

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proposed rule sets a national average refinery standard for benzene content of 0.62 percent by volume on all gasoline, coupled with an averaging, banking, and trading program.

Summary of Bill:

The Legislature requests that Congress reconsider the preemption of state authority under the Clean Air Act and delegate to the states the authority to regulate the effects of known carcinogens such as benzene.

The Legislature requests that the EPA equalize federal treatment of benzene by promulgating rules that do not put the health and well-being of Washington citizens at a greater risk than other citizens of the nation.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.